

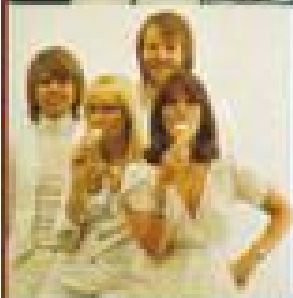
ARIBA





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9	Dance (While The Music Still Goes On)	3:11
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14	Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!	4:46
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- | | | |
|----|--|------|
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| 6 | Our Last Summer | 4:19 |
| 7 | The Way Old Friends Do | 3:53 |
| 8 | The Visitors | 3:44 |
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| 10 | Should I Laugh Or Cry | 4:26 |
| 11 | Head Over Heels | 3:45 |
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| 13 | Like An Angel Passing
Through My Room | 3:38 |
| 14 | The Day Before You Came | 3:47 |
| 15 | Cassandra | 4:00 |
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Disc 4

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 1 | Put On Your White Sombriero | 4:28 |
| 2 | Dream World | 3:25 |
| 3 | Thank You For The Music | 4:01 |
| 4 | Høj Gæmle Man I | 3:19 |
| 5 | Merry - Go - Round | 3:18 |
| 6 | Santa Rosa | 3:01 |
| 7 | She's My Kind Of Girl | 3:35 |
| 8 | Medley
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| 9 | You Owe Me One | 3:24 |
| 10 | Slipping Through My Fingers/
Me And I (Live) | 3:37 |
| 11 | Abba Undelated
Screamshaker/Sunshine City
Take A Chance On Me/Baby
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Bunking My Bridges/Fernando
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| 13 | Ring Ring Swedish/Spanish/German | 4:20 |
| 14 | Honey Honey Swedish | 2:17 |







forward

Björn, Benny, Agnetha, Frida

We've always been adamant about unreleased songs. Leave them be. If we didn't release them at the time, there must have been a reason, even if it's sometimes difficult to remember afterwards what that reason might have been.

However, in this context it's different. It is 15 to 20 years on, and when Polygram decided to release more or less our whole production, a documentation of ABBA's career, we felt it would be natural to include a few tracks and demos that didn't quite make it at the time.

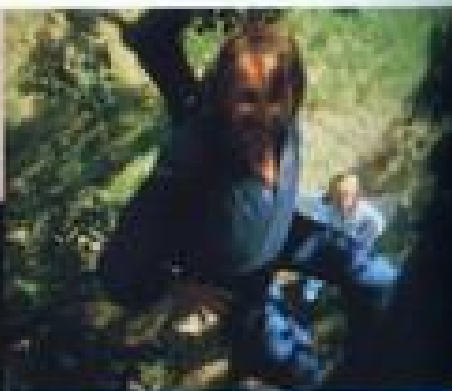
As a whole, we are very proud of this package. It does bring back a lot of memories. From a professional point of view, if it wasn't for some of the stage outfits in the early days, these memories would be almost unblemished.



Björn
Benny
Agnetha
Frida

Björn Ulvæus Benny Andersson Agnetha Fältskog Frida Lyngsted 1994







preface

Stig Anderson

Agnetha, Frida, Björn & Benny were artists in their own rights, but happened to meet in the late 60's. Björn found Benny and they started to write songs together. Then Björn met Agnetha and Benny Frida and they started to make recordings together.

Early in the 70's we had some success in Japan under the name Björn & Benny and then we also had a minor hit in the States bubbling under the Billboard Hot 100 list under the name Björn & Benny & Svenske Flicka. In 1973 they were still called Björn, Benny, Agnetha & Annifrid. However, this became too long for an artist's name and so I took the initial letters and came up with the name ABBA. I was their manager, publisher and sometimes also the lyric writer and their first big international hit was "Waterloo". Then of course you can say the rest is history, with such big international hits as "Mamma Mia", "Fernando", "Knowing Me, Knowing You", "The Winner Takes It All" and many more.

We have estimated that if you take into consideration the singles, LP's, cassettes, CD's and compilations that we have sold over the world, we have now passed 250 million records.

That's the fairy tale of ABBA.

Regards,

Stig Anderson

Manager, publisher, lyric writer



OUR LAST SUMMER
MEMORIES THAT REMAIN

And how you're always
In a mood
A really nice
A really fun
And you're always in there
And you're always
And you're always
And you're always

I CAN STILL RECALL
OUR LAST SUMMER
I STILL SEE IT ALL
HAPPEN AROUND THE BURN
LAUGHING IN THE RAIN
OUR LAST SUMMER
MEMORIES THAT REMAIN

I CAN STILL RECALL
OUR LAST SUMMER
I STILL SEE IT ALL
IN THE BURNING

OUR LAST SUMMER
MORNING CROSSANTS
LIVING FOR THE DAY
WORRIES FAR AWAY
OUR LAST SUMMER
WE COULD LAUGH AND PLAY



A family man
A soccer fan
And your name is Harry
How dull it seems
Yet you're the hero
Of my dreams

I CAN STILL RECALL
OUR LAST SUMMER
I STILL SEE IT ALL
WALKS ALONG THE SEINE
LAUGHING IN THE RAIN
OUR LAST SUMMER
MEMORIES THAT REMAIN







made in sweden

Fred Bronson

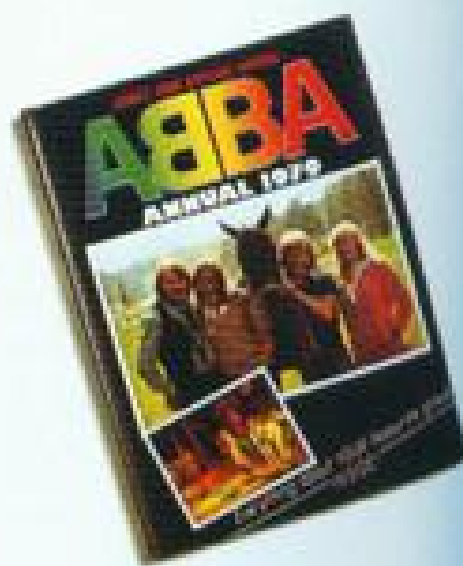
"Oh, that was a very long time ago," Benny Andersson responds when asked to talk about the rock and roll band he helped found. The words don't quite register at first. After all, to their millions of fans around the world, Abba is very much a part of the present.

That time warp exists because of the increased interest in the group in the last two years, as evidenced by tributes from the likes of Enya and Australia's Björn Again, as well as sales in excess of seven million copies of the "Abba Gold" collection. It also exists because many of those who love Abba so deeply do not wish to acknowledge that the quartet has been inactive for over 10 years. It's a bigger shock to realise that more than 20 years have passed since the Swedish foursome captured the Eurovision Song Contest prize, catapulting them overnight onto the world stage. Perhaps it all was a very long time ago.

To the rest of the world, Abba emerged as a group, consisting of two attractive couples of Scandinavian descent. But at home, Abba was a supergroup, made up of four people who had already established themselves as stars. The two women had their respective solo careers, and the two men had each been in immensely popular groups, although of different genres. Björn Ulvæus was born in Gothenburg, where his father owned a shipyard just north of the city. "That went bust when I was six," the artist recalls. "He had a brother who had a paper mill in

Vesterås, a small town 300 kilometers south of Stockholm on the coast of the Baltic. So we moved there and he gave my father a job." Björn's interest in music was fuelled when he heard Elvis Presley on the radio, as well as seminal American pop songs like "Tutti Frutti" by Little Richard. He saved his money to buy singles and EPs and was inspired by his year-older cousin, Joen Ulfster, who played skiffle music on his guitar. Björn's parents supported his interest in music by buying him a guitar when he was 12. He formed a skiffle group with his cousin, and was serious enough about the music to dismiss Lonnie Donegan as being too commercial. "We were down to the roots," he explains. His heroes were members of a British group known as the Vipers Skiffle Group. "We didn't understand what they were saying. We were just writing it down phonetically, trying to sound like them. My cousin played the trumpet as well and I played the banjo, so we [also] had a trad jazz band."

Music was not how Björn planned to earn his living. "What [my parents] had chosen for me and what I was working toward was to become a civil engineer." Even when Björn joined a folk group, the





Hootenanny Singers, it seemed like a temporary thing. "I was touring all over Sweden. But I thought this would only be for two years, if even that." As the success of the Hootenanny Singers tapered off, Björn considered becoming a lawyer. But a fateful meeting changed all that. Born in Vällingby, a suburb of Stockholm, Benny Andersson grew up in a family that loved music. "My father played the accordion and so did my grandfather just for fun. They taught me how to play when I was six. When I was 10, they bought me a piano. I never took lessons, really." Benny's father earned his living as a carpenter before becoming a building engineer, supervising construction for a large company in Stockholm and surrounding suburbs. "When I finished school at 16, I started to work at one of those projects. I suppose I meant to learn how to become an engineer myself. I didn't really like it, though." Benny remembers the exact moment he knew that music was going to be more than something he did for fun. "There was this place where young people went in the evening. They had different activities and dances on Wednesdays and Saturdays. When the band took a break, occasionally I jumped on stage and played a little piano boogie woogie stuff. Somebody who was just forming a band heard me and asked if I wanted to play piano, which I did for three or four nights. I must have been 14."

There were other jobs. "I needed to make a living," says Benny, who spent three weeks selling washing machines door-to-door, except he didn't actually sell any. So he went back to school to complete his ninth year. "I was three or four years older than all the others. But my teacher took me back." Benny was studying for his first exam since his return when he received a call asking him to join a group that had already recorded one single. He said yes to the Hep Stars right away. "In one second. And I tried to study and be with them at the same time. It didn't work because they were on the road." Just after he joined, the Hep Stars recorded three

songs in one day. "Cadillac" went to No. 1 in Sweden. "Farmer John" peaked at No. 2 and "A Tribute To Buddy Holly" reached No. 4. None of the three were written by a Hep Star. Then Benny heard a song that he thought would be good if he could change it around. "That's how I started to write music." The result was "No Response," released as a Hep Stars single in December, 1965. "I didn't know any English at the time. All the lyrics I wrote were dictionary lyrics. That's why they're not very good. The second [song] was called "Sunny Girl." That was a big hit here and I was very happy about that. Then I felt I had the ability to write songs."

The Hep Stars and the Hootenanny Singers had both achieved fame by 1965, and as both bands toured the country that summer playing folk parks - fun fairs that attracted large crowds on Friday and Saturday nights - it was inevitable that the two groups would meet. One day their tour buses were on the same road at the same time. "It said 'Hep Stars' on theirs and 'Hootenannys' on ours and we stopped and said hello," Björn remembers.

The groups decided to get together later that evening after playing their respective dates.

"They came to Västervik in the middle of the night and we had a party," Björn continues. It was the first time that he and Benny sat down and talked to each other. "He was a nice bloke,"

Benny says of his future song-writing partner and friend. "We played a little guitar and sang old Kingston Trio songs. We said that maybe we should do something together one day. Soon after we were in his hometown and met again." Benny brought his Hammond organ and amplifiers to the basement in the home of Björn's parents. "We were so noisy that my dad came down and said, 'I'm sorry. I like what you're doing,



delighting, however, that

produced a mixture of the most beautiful for the American group. The "American" style is the most "American", and the most "American" is the most "American".





but you cannot stay.' And then he gave us the key to his office at the paper mill," Björn recounts. Working late into the night, the first Andersson-Ulvæus song was written. There was no question which group would record "Isn't It Easy To Say."

"That was the type of song the Hep Stars would record because our group was more like a folk group, which I hated because the Beatles had started and I wanted to be in pop,"

says Björn. He was soon to have his wish: the Hep Stars split, and the Hootenanny Singers, which even included Benny for one summer, gradually faded away. But before those two groups ended, Benny and Björn met the two women who would play very important roles in their lives.

Anni-Frid Lyngstad was born in Norway just a few months before the end of World War II. Her father was a German soldier who returned home without realising that 19-year-old Synni Lyngstad was pregnant. Two years later, Synni died and her mother took responsibility for raising Synni's infant daughter. They moved to Sweden, where young Anni-Frid learned traditional folk songs from her grandmother. "I made my first official stage appearance when I was only 11. I listened to the radio and I bought records. One of my favourites was 'Blue Moon.' Plus Elvis and Tommy Steele. Those were my first musical influences."

She sang with a jazz band, and then formed the Anni-Frid Four with Ragnar Frederiksson, the man who would become her first husband. But there were bigger things in store for Frida. She signed with EMI-Sweden, and relocated to Stockholm, away from her family. She was on a seven-month tour with Charlie Norman when she met Benny Andersson at a restaurant in Malmö. "He was with Björn to write songs for the Swedish song contest. Nothing

extraordinary happened," she recalls. "We had a little party in a hotel room. The next time I met him was in Stockholm." Frida and Björn were members of a radio show juke box jury deciding if new records would hit or miss and Benny was playing the presiding judge. Soon after, Benny and Frida became romantically involved.

Agnetha Fältskog was born in Jönköping, in southern Sweden. Her father organised local amateur productions, and by the time she was six, Agnetha was appearing on stage. She studied piano and wrote her own songs, and after breaking up with a boyfriend at age 17, poured her heart into a number called "I Was So In Love." A talent scout heard it and signed her to a CBS label in Sweden. In early 1968, "I Was So In Love" went to the top of the Swedish chart. Agnetha was a well-known star by the time she appeared on a television programme that also featured Björn as a guest. From there, romance blossomed. But if Benny, Björn, Frida, and Agnetha had to make a decision about their career together based on their first professional engagement, Abba would never have happened.

"The first thing together was so abysmal," Björn confides. "It was the worst period in my professional life. At the time, the thing to do was become a cabaret act. Everyone said you should play restaurants where people sat at tables, and you had to be entertaining and sing funny lyrics. We played different cities with this act where Benny and I were trying to act like two little boys with lollipops. It was so bad. I remember one night in Gothenberg... we had three people sitting out there. I thought this is the end."

It was during this period that Stig Anderson hired Björn and Benny to write songs for his company, Polar Music. They recorded an album, "Lycka," which included the song "Hej Gamla Man," the first recording to feature Björn, Benny, Agnetha and Frida. "We included it in the act and it got by far the best reception," says Björn. "And we told ourselves, 'This is what we should do,





"That other crap goes out. We should do our own stuff. And soon after that we tried our first single in English because Benny and I still really wanted to do pop, as we had been doing before this bloody cabaret period."

Agnetha and Frida continued working on their own and Benny and Björn continued to write and produce for Polar, working in an office from 9 to 5. One assignment was to write a song for popular Swedish vocalist Lena Andersson to sing in the Eurovision Song Contest. She was placed third, and Benny and Björn travelled to London to record the song in English with the help of Wayne Bickerton and Tony Waddington. "Better To Have Loved" was a hit in Sweden, but failed to ignite any fires internationally. "And then we wrote 'People Need Love' and thought, 'Let's do it - the four of us,'" says Björn. "I had a fairly good grasp of English even then. Not like now, but pretty good. Although lyrics at that time didn't mean anything to me other than they had to sound good." With "People Need Love" in the can, the four artists made a discovery. "We realized that the girls were the better singers," they were invited to compete in the 1972 Japanese Song Festival. Agnetha and Frida joined them to perform "Santa Rosa." "That's a bad one," Benny says candidly. "That was originally called 'Grandpa's Benjo.' I don't like it. It's one of those we shouldn't have recorded."

After "People Need Love" and "He Is Your Brother" made chart waves in Sweden in 1972, Björn, Benny and their sometimes-writing partner Stig Anderson were invited to come up with a song for the Swedish preliminary of the 1973 Eurovision Song Contest. On 10 February 1973, a Stockholm audience went wild for "Ring Ring," but the official judges selected the duo of Goran Fristorp and Claes af Geijerstam and their song, which translates directly into English as "Your Dreams Are Like Nesting Swallows." A public uproar followed, and as a result the rules were changed so that the following year, the public would choose the song that would represent Sweden at Eurovision.

Stig released "Ring Ring" in Swedish and it went to No. 1 at home and became a hit in Norway, Denmark, and Finland. He also had the foresight to record the song in English, with lyrics by American collaborators Neil Sedaka and Phil Cody. That version topped the charts in Australia, Holland, Belgium, and South Africa. In the U.K., three different record companies turned Stig down before CBS' Epic label agreed to issue the single. It failed to chart.

By this time, the media had grown tired of referring to the group by the unwieldy title of their four names, so someone thought to shorten it to their first initials.

"It was a little confusing because we have a fish factory in Sweden that is called Abba," explains Agnetha.

"When we decided to call ourselves A-B-B-A, we had to ask for permission and the factory said, 'O.K., as long as you don't make us feel ashamed for what you're doing.' I think we did a good job," she laughs.

With 1974's Eurovision approaching, the group decided to compete once more for the right to represent Sweden. "You have to understand one thing about the Eurovision Song Contest," says Björn. "At that time, that was the one and only vehicle to reach outside Sweden. Because there was no way anyone in England or America would listen to anything coming out of this obscure country. You could send your tapes, knowing they would throw them away immediately. So the only chance was to enter Eurovision."

Despite their loss the previous year, the composers had great self-confidence, according to Björn. "We had a choice between two songs... 'Hasta Manana' and 'Waterloo.' 'Hasta Manana' was the more typical Eurovision song, but we went for 'Waterloo' because it was more fun to perform. It could have been 'Hasta Manana,' and [Abba] would never have happened. It wouldn't have won." Björn and Benny quickly sussed out their





competition at the Dome in Brighton. "We were very much afraid of the Dutch entry," Björn says of "I See A Star" by Mouth & MacNeal, the ultimate third-place finisher. "We thought that one was really dangerous." "I had not expected us to win," Frida reveals. "You never expect yourself to win the competition, at least not one like that." Björn's strongest memory of the event is being overweight at the time. "When we went [to the Dome] by bus, I couldn't sit down in my stage outfit. I had to half stand because my trousers were so tight." And he'll never forget what happened to him when "Waterloo" came in first. "When you win, they ask the songwriters to come on stage. There was a guy standing at the bottom of the stairs who was supposed to look after these things. Benny and Sög went up on stage, but he stopped me. I was in an artist's outfit and he thought I hadn't understood that this was for the songwriters." Björn was finally allowed up when the artists were announced. And he knew in that instant that his world had changed.

"It was euphoria because we could see the world at our feet." A rush of activity followed in the next 24 hours, as Abba became media darlings. The frenzy wasn't unexpected, but the magnitude of it caught them by surprise.

"We had seen what happened to major Eurovision winners before," Björn explains. "But to live it...to be whisked up to London in a Rolls Royce directly to 'Top Of The Pops,' that was a dream come true, appearing in the same place that the Beatles had and all those other groups." Even in the madness, Benny knew what impact this was going to have on the group's future: "We achieved overnight what we had been working toward for a couple of years, for other countries to realize that we existed, a band from Sweden writing songs in English trying to make pop music."

In retrospect, Abba is the most successful example of a band that went from obscurity to world fame thanks to a Eurovision win. Many others before and after had their moment or two in the spotlight and then disappeared. Even when "Waterloo" topped the chart in Britain, some opined that Abba would suffer that fate. "Everyone else had decided already that this was the usual one-hit wonder of Eurovision," says Björn. "We knew inside - and nobody else did - that we had come to stay. We knew the potential we had as recording artists as well as songwriters."

There was another immediate success that caught the group off-guard. "Waterloo," released on Atlantic Records, was a hit in the United States, breaking into the Billboard top 10 at No. 6. America hadn't even noticed the group's pre-Eurovision releases on Hugh Hefner's Playboy label. "We had been told that America was different from the rest of the world in respect of its mass media structure," says Björn. "The groups that were successful in America spent most of their time there."

They toured and went to all the radio stations, whereas in Europe you just had to appear on one TV programme in each country." Criss-crossing America was out of the question. "Agnetha and I had a little child and we didn't want to leave her. So we were not prepared to travel that much and that far. 'Waterloo' was quite a big hit but we were a very anonymous group to the Americans. We tried to do the 'Merv Griffin' and 'The Dinah Shore Show's, things like that."

In the U.K., a remixed version of "Ring Ring" was released as the follow-up to "Waterloo," but it reached a disappointing No. 32. It must have seemed that Abba would become a Eurovision flash in the pan when their next single, "So Long," didn't even chart, and then "I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do" faltered at No. 38. But then one of the most incredible hit streaks in history began, with the release of the single that in three minutes and 22 seconds summed up what Abba was all about. "S.O.S." jumped out of the

THEY WERE BY NO MEANS FAVORITES FOR THE CONTEST. ON THE VERY DAY BEFORE THE COMPETITION, STIG ANDERSSON PLACED A BET.

THENTY FRIENDS THAT SAYS HE WON. AND I GOT ODDS OF THENTY TO ONE AGAINST!

OH, STIG! I'M GLAD YOU BELIEVE IN US, AT LEAST!

TENSION BUILT UP AS REHEARSALS BEGAN! THERE WAS A COLOSSAL ROW BETWEEN STIG AND THE ENTIRE SWEDISH RADIO TROUPE ALONG WITH THEM...



STIG'S ANSWER— TO SHUT UP THE WORDS FOR 'THANK YOU' IN AS MANY EUROPEAN LANGUAGES AS HE COULD MASTER — AT LEAST KEPT HIM OCCUPIED!

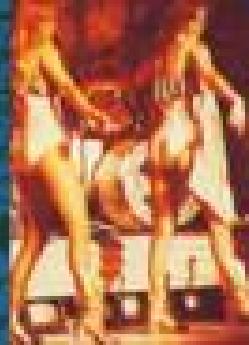


THE TELECAST WENT BY IN A DREZZY BLUR. NOW IT WAS ALL OVER— TIME FOR THE AABA. TENSION OF WATCHING THE VOTES COME IN!



RIGHT TO THE END, IT WAS TERRIFYINGLY CLOSE! BUT AABA CAME AHEAD... AND FINISHED SIX POINTS AHEAD OF THEIR RIVALS! THE THENTY-TO-ONE OUTSIDERS HAD DONE IT!





radio with its multi-layered, wall-of-sound production, a perfect example of the influence of Phil Spector and Brian Wilson on Benny and Björn's writing and producing. It went to No. 6 on the British chart, the first of 16 consecutive top 10 singles between September 1975 and January 1982. Only the Rolling Stones, Elvis Presley, the Beatles, Cliff Richard, and Madonna have had longer runs of top 10 singles. "Waterloo" was one thing, but then it really started happening with "S.O.S." and "Mamma Mia" and we got over that slump we had in England and came back with a vengeance," says Björn, who recalls the flood of telexes coming in from around the world with news of the single going to No. 1 here, that single going to No. 1 there. "We had truly become international."

But why did ABBA appeal to so many different people in so many different countries? To this day, even the members of the group can only speculate. "Other groups have good singers, good songs, good production, but given the background that Benny and I had as songwriters, maybe we had a bigger range. Because there was the Latin American influence, the German, the Italian, the English, the American, all of that. I suppose we were a bit exotic in every territory in an acceptable way. And also we were leaning toward what we thought were strong melodies in those days, rock groups were not into melody. But I really don't know the answer. No one does, I think."

ABBA racked up multiple No. 1 singles all over the globe, but in America they only went to the top of the chart once. "We were at the office together that day and suddenly we heard a scream: 'ABBA is No. 1 this week in the States,'" Agnetha recalls. "That was a big moment. We celebrated with a bottle of champagne." Frida was not surprised at which song the Americans made No. 1. "My favourite is 'Dancing Queen,' period. I love that song. And I loved it from the very beginning when Benny brought home the backing track without any vocals on it. I don't remember if the lyrics were done. They had been in the studio all day and they had recorded the backing track, the

instruments. And it was so beautiful I started to cry. I mean, even without lyrics or voices on it, it was outstanding."

Agnetha makes a different selection when asked which ABBA song she likes best. "It's always difficult to choose because I think we did so many good songs, but my personal favourite is 'The Winner Takes It All.'" The same title shows up on Benny's list:

"I think that the simplest and (yet) still sophisticated song is 'The Winner Takes It All.' It's two short themes, not a verse and a chorus. It's just a tune and a little bridge.

It goes around and around and still it's not boring. A good performance by Agnetha as well. "Among Benny's other favourites: 'My Love, My Life' is a good song, but not a good recording. 'Knowing You, Knowing Me' is a good song and a good recording. 'Dancing Queen' as well."

The songwriting process is difficult to describe, according to Benny, although he makes an attempt: "We've always been very methodical, sitting there and working with it hours and hours and hours. And sometimes nothing happens and sometimes it does. When I hear what I'm trying to achieve at a certain moment, I ask myself why don't I go for that immediately instead of waiting three months for it to happen... it has to be a long process and you have to be available for the moment when it hits you. It has never happened walking in the street and all of a sudden there's a tune in my head. It's always sitting down at the piano."

And as the process continues, some songs mutate and change, others get put away on the shelf, others survive intact. "Does Your Mother Know," for example, contains a melodic line that originated in "Dream World," a song that featured the women on lead vocals instead of Björn. "Dream World" is one of those examples where we took it in the studio and worked with it and found





out that it didn't work. Or we thought it didn't work at that time. Usually we wouldn't get that far - we would just have the fragments, but not the whole song. That got recorded and we thought it didn't have what it takes, so we put it aside," Björn recounts. "But always keeping in your head the bits and pieces that are good, even if the song was rejected. And that is exactly what happened with that bit out of 'Dream World.' All of a sudden we had this other [song] and oh, that [old bit] fits perfectly. It's like a puzzle." And why did Björn sing lead on "Does Your Mother Know"? "We thought a good balance would be if I had the lead vocal on one or two tracks on each album. Just for variety. So when the girls had four songs each, that's when we started to think of something for me. Selecting the songs that would become singles was a process that slowly changed over the years, according to Benny. "Obviously we had our own picks. We had a feeling for what we liked best and what would be suitable as singles everytime we finished an album." Björn adds, "We would send [an album] out to people we learned to trust over the years - different people in different countries and they would sit down and listen carefully and come back with a sort of 'chart' of that album. We would compile the charts and if we agreed with what the charts said, we'd go ahead. On the other hand, if we didn't agree with the charts, we would have it our way. Of course, Stig would have one view and Benny had one and I had one... but most of the time the first single out of any album used to be the same all over. It was the third or fourth that was different." Benny concedes, "Maybe they came in the wrong order every now and then. [But] there was never a single release that we didn't approve of."

In October of 1982, Abba released a single that wasn't attached to a regular studio album. "The Day Before You Came," included a month later on their compilation, "The Singles - The First Ten Years," was in the last group of songs to be recorded by Abba, although they

didn't realize it at the time. "The song was not even written when we were in the studio," says Benny, "so we worked from zero in the studio with that one. I like the song very much and I like the lyric. We went a bit over the top, though, because the lyric and the song is sort of minimalistic in a way. There's almost no backing track. We wanted Agnetha to be ordinary, and not use her singing abilities in order to act [like] an ordinary woman in the suburbs."

I think that was a mistake, because if you want to act a role in a song, you don't necessarily have to underuse your ability as a singer."

Still, the song is another of Benny's favourites. "It has a lot of feeling. I'd like to record it again one day."

Along with "The Day Before You Came," the last batch of Abba songs to be recorded included "Under Attack" and "You Owe Me One," released back-to-back as the last original Abba single, and "I Am The City" and "Just Like That," intended for a 10th studio album. But there was no 10th studio album, and "I Am The City" didn't surface until the 1993 release of "More Abba Gold." "Just Like That" was rewritten by Benny and Björn and produced by them for Gemini, a Swedish duo made up of brother and sister Anders & Karin Glenmark who had recorded backing vocals for the concept album "Chess."

It wasn't a surprise to the four members that Abba was coming to an end. "Yes, you know things like that," Frida confirms. "This was a very sad time personally, because I split up with Benny... we still went on because we wanted to finish 'The Visitors' album... we never mentioned it, but there was a certain atmosphere between the four of us." Agnetha, divorced from Björn since 1979, also recalls the group's final days. "Abba as a group started very naturally. It also ended very natural because we always said that we're going to do this together as long



as it is fun, and when it's not fun anymore, we have to stop. And that's what we did. We had a great time and we are all very pleased and proud of what we have achieved, but everything has an end."

The post-Abba '80s saw Agnetha and Frida continuing to record solo albums, and Benny and Björn teaming up with Tim Rice to write the musical "Chess." By the '90s, Agnetha had left the music business behind completely, and Frida founded an environmental foundation that she runs on a day-to-day basis. Rumours that she was going to record a new album were printed in mid-1994, but she confessed to being ambivalent about such an undertaking. Benny and Björn spent most of the first half of the decade writing a second musical, "The Immigrants," scheduled to open in Sweden in 1995. In 1993, Benny produced an album for Swedish vocalist Josefin Nilsson. "I saw her on television four or five years ago and thought she was a great artist. I called her and she said, 'Fine, but not now,' because she was doing other things. So it took a couple of years before we did this record. And it was meant to be in Swedish, but she was very determined to do a pop record in English... we're going to do another one, but not until we're through with *The Immigrants*."

Björn modestly attributes the attention Abba has received in the '90s to a nostalgia for the '70s, but of course, it's much more than that. There's a timelessness to Abba's music that transcends decades. And with bands like U2 and the Lemonheads acknowledging their love for Abba, it's much more acceptable in the '90s to be public about one's love for the four people from Sweden who became global successes of unprecedented proportions. "I'm very happy because it shows that our music is still outstanding," Frida says of what has been termed "the Abba revival" in the press. "And this was to be proved, because we had so many critical voices during the time we were working actively. So this is a kind of statement that we really made it. Otherwise, I look upon it all with a kind of nostalgia because



Benny and Björn onstage with U2 in Stockholm 11 June 1992

it was quite a long time ago and the life I'm leading now is completely different to the one I led then."

That leads to the one remaining question that is on the lips of every Abba fan. Will the group ever record again? "I can only speak for myself," Agnetha said a few years ago, "and I don't think so. But you never know what will happen in the future."

"I don't know," Benny replies when asked what the chances are. "It's not zero. We never intended to quit, though we did. But I can't really see a reason for it. We might one day come up with a good reason... it could be for fun. Or maybe I should say, it could only be for fun. That would mean it would be necessary for all of us to think it's fun."

It would have to be good as well. That's why it probably won't happen. But you can never say never. Whether there is ever any more Abba or not, this collection will let future generations know why the people of the last quarter of the 20th century were so passionate about the quartet from Scandinavia with the palindrome name. The citizens of the future will listen to this digital transcription of the blending of Agnetha and Frida's voices, to the laser beams bouncing over the deeply-textured productions, to the lightwaves carrying Benny and Björn's intricate music and clever lyrics, and they'll know what made our emotions soar, our hearts race, and our pulses quicken. They'll know the magic of Abba.

Fred Bronson

August, 1994

Fred Bronson is the author of *The Billboard Book Of Number One Hits*, and writes the popular Chart Beat column in *Billboard*. His essay is based on interviews with Agnetha Fältskog (April, 1988) and Björn Ulvæus, Benny Andersson, and Frida Lyngsted (July, 1994).





WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE

230 HERE'S TO US
ONE MORE TOAST
AND THEN WE'LL
PAY THE BILL
DEEP INSIDE
BOTH OF US
CAN FEEL THE
AUTUMN CHILL
BIRDS OF PASSAGE
YOU AND ME
WE FLY INSTINCTIVELY
WHEN THE SUMMER'S
OVER AND THE DARK
CLOUDS HIDE THE SUN
NEITHER YOU NOR I'M
TO BLAME
WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE

90 IN OUR LIVES
WE HAVE WALKED
SOME STRANGE
AND LONELY TREKS
SLIGHTLY WON
BUT DISMAYED
AND NOT TOO
OLD FOR SEX
WE'RE STILL STRIVING
FOR THE SKY
NO TASTE FOR HUMBLE PIE
THANKS FOR ALL
YOUR GENEROUS LOVE







how it all began

By John Tobler

It's generally accepted that the ABBA story really started at the Eurovision Song Contest, held in Brighton, on the south coast of England, on 6th April, 1974. Before that day, ABBA were just another act from the mainland of Europe

who might, if they were lucky, get a hit in Britain if they won the contest, but if they didn't, would almost certainly be forgotten by the beginning of May - look at what had happened to Anne-Marie David, the 1973 winner, Fee, other than her immediate family and Eurovision statisticians - is likely to recall that Anne-Marie's Eurovision win came with 'Wonderful Dream', a song whose title betrays its style, a typically cheerful Eurovision effort. The British entry that year was a hot favourite, in theory - Cliff Richard was back, attempting to improve on his runner-up slot gained in 1968 with the infuriatingly catchy 'Congratulations', which was beaten by the even less lyrically challenging 'La La La', sung by Massiel, from Spain. Cliff was hoping to improve on the second place achieved by The New Seekers with 'Beg, Steal Or Borrow' in 1972. So what happens? He's given an ideskit Eurovision song, 'Power To All Our Friends', and comes second.

What has Anne-Marie David got to do with ABBA? One of the rarest ABBA records is a so-called 'Maui-EP' titled 'The Music People At EUROVISION', a promotional only item which includes 'Waterloo', and was in fact released the day before the contest and deleted a few days later. The other tracks on the

7" 45 were 'Si' by Gigliola Cinquetti, a previous Eurovision winner in 1964 when she was a teenager with the memorable 'Non Ho L'Eta Per Amarti', which was taken to mean 'I'm too young to make love', and 'Mein Ruf Nach Dir', the entry from Switzerland sung by - this is true - a female bricklayer named Piera Martelli. These three tracks were all licensed to CBS and as a bonus, the fourth track was Anne-Marie David's 'Wonderful Dream', the 1973 Eurovision winner, which had conveniently been released on the CBS-associated Epic label. Another significant item concerning Anne-Marie, although it probably remains a Eurovision custom that the contest is hosted by the country which came first the previous year, Anne-Marie had represented Luxembourg in 1973, but the 1974 contest, which launched ABBA as international stars, was held in Brighton. Why? There are vague recollections of Luxembourg declining the privilege because of its lack of a suitably grand venue (or something like that), which was why the UK, as 1973 runners-up, had taken on the show.

My qualification for having so often written about ABBA is that 1 April, 1974 (that's the start of the week which ended with ABBA's triumph), was my first day

**THE DOME BRIGHTON
EUROVISION SONG CONTEST**

SATURDAY 30th APRIL 1974

ROW E 17 STALLS CIRCLE

CASHIER BOOKS ARE NOT ADMITTED
SEATING ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IN FORCE
AND ARE FOR YOUR KIND CONSIDERATION
NO SMOKING PERMITTED BY THE AUDITORIUM
NOT TRANSFERABLE

**EUROVISION SONG
CONTEST**

DOORS OPEN 8.15 PM
NOT ADMITTED
UNTIL 8.15 PM

**ROW E 17
STALLS CIRCLE**

CONCERT GOES TO ZERO
NOT FOR SALE





as CBS Press Officer. Previously a computer programmer (for a big bank) by day and a fanzine writer by night, I had ambitiously accepted an offer from CBS and on my first day there was talk around the office of CBS possibly having the Eurovision winner with either Gigliola (who had won it before) or ABBA, whose record was rather good, and was sung in English, which had to give it a better chance than if it had been sung in Swedish. OK, but what about the UK entry, Olivia Newton-John with 'Long Live Love'? Yet another title from the Eurovision Cliché Collection, but that was what had been chosen, probably by a countrywide TV audience, to represent this sceptered isle, and on the morning of the contest, the lovely Ms. Neutron Bomb was a red hot favourite. As a newcomer to CBS, I didn't represent the company at the contest (which was frankly a relief for an ex-'underground' rock writer, because Eurovision was regarded by the UK rock media as highly suspect in musical terms). Fortunately for me, another CBS act, Doctor Hook & The Medicine Show were playing in London that Saturday, probably at The Rainbow, so my job was to fly the CBS flag, gladhand journalists and buy people drinks on behalf of an American band which had been in the Top 3 a few months before with 'Sylvia's Mother'.

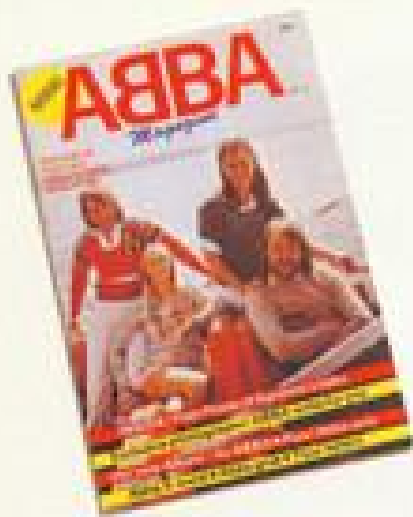
So my memories of Sven-Olof Waldoff, the conductor of the Eurovision orchestra, wearing his Napoleonic hat (to go with 'Waterloo', which of course mentions Bonaparte in its opening line) are all second-hand, from sleeves and video clips, but they remain vivid 20 years later. Winning Eurovision may seem like a minor achievement, for all the good it does most of its winners, but Stig Anderson, who had played midwife at ABBA's birth, saw it as a springboard to the Holy Grail of the British and especially the American charts, which they had tickled in 1972 with a single released on Playboy Records of 'People Need Love', credited to Björn & Benny, and in smaller letters '(with Svenska Flicka)', who were actually Agnetha and Anni-Frid. It is more than

likely that Stig's refusal to credit them as Björn, Benny, Agnetha & Frida due to its radio-unfriendliness outside Scandinavia led to his starting to refer to them as ABBA. 'People Need Love', despite being credited to a similarly 'foreign' sounding act, was looking like a US chart single, until Playboy, a small independent label, found that its distribution arrangements (getting records into shops) were sadly incapable of coping with the growing demand.

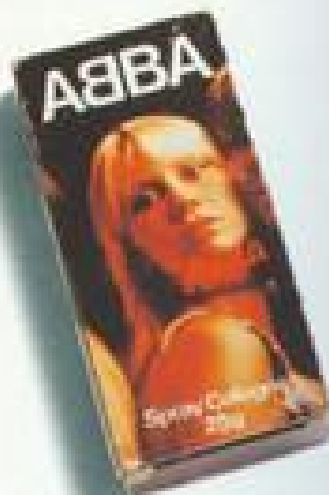
Eurovision was a foot on the yellow brick road, Stig reasoned, and the planning that went in to the 'Waterloo' campaign to ensure that every detail of the lyrics, the music, the backing, the performance, the look, everything, was as good as they could make it, was considerable.

Most acts probably aim for the best they can achieve, but ABBA had several advantages - long experience as local chart artists in other contexts - Agnetha had made her first album and her first Number One single when she was 18, six years before Eurovision, Benny had been the keyboard player in The Hep Stars, who were regarded as the Swedish equivalent of The Beatles in the Sixties, Björn had been in another hit group, The Hootenanny Singers, before joining Benny in the Hep Stars, Anni-Frid had also had a number of hits, and they had the resources to create a big hit. Of course, they couldn't have done it without being exceptionally talented, but the strategy, decided by Stig, Benny and Björn, was also extremely important.

After the Dr. Hook show, which was pretty good, on arriving home there was a message instructing me to be at The Bedford Hotel in Brighton at 9am the next morning (Sunday 7 April, 1994) to host a champagne breakfast for the media to celebrate ABBA's famous win with 'Waterloo'. Fleet Street's finest were there,



Dick Cavett meets ABBA





and we did the breakfast, then it was time to go on the beach for a photo call. Every photo library in the world must have one of those beach shots in their files, Anni-Frid in her lucky black hat, Benny in smart leisure wear, Björn wearing a pink satin jacket, and Agnetha looking quite like Marilyn Monroe. A slightly shell-shocked Björn and Benny, Agnetha laughing and Anni-Frid trying to hold her hat on in the sea breeze. Much attention from the press as 'Waterloo', which had set higher standards than any previous Eurovision winner, stormed up the singles chart and reached the very top. It became clear that ABBA had won because on the day they were in a different class from the other performers - it would be foolish to suggest that Olivia Newton-John has not enjoyed considerable international success subsequently, and no such accusation is intended here, but the song with which the British TV audience had saddled her was uninspired (to be polite), a fact about which she complained, with some justification, on that memorable Sunday morning. ABBA had made an above-average song into a visual tour de force, with the unusual line up of two males and two females, and eye-catching costumes, especially on the two girls (politically incorrect, but accurate) but not forgetting Björn's star-shaped guitar. Lead vocalist Agnetha, a 24 year old blonde with film star looks who was - great gimmick! - married to Björn, the guitarist, while Frida, the mature siren whose vocal harmonies were equally vital in creating ABBA's trademark vocals, was engaged to Benny, the keyboard player who looks a bit like Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys, one of his (Benny's) favourite groups in the Sixties.

Such sexual chemistry as well as an attractive choreographed approach to their onstage performances made ABBA overnight stars in Britain, and 'Waterloo' was Number One in 13 other countries,

even making the Top 10 in the US, a considerable achievement in the country where rock'n'roll was born. However, the spectre of the one hit wonder syndrome cast a shadow over ABBA's status in Britain. Their follow-up single, 'Ring Ring', was actually much more like a Eurovision song than 'Waterloo', and in fact had been controversially rejected by the Swedish Eurovision panel in 1973. Neil Sedaka and his then partner, Phil Cody, had been asked to tart the song up, mostly lyrically, but it made little difference. It had actually been released in Britain in late 1973, but had flopped, although it had been a hit all over continental Europe. The CBS A&R boss in London, Paul Atkinson, who had been a pop star himself a few years before as a member of The Zombies ('She's Not There', 'Time Of The Season', etc.), did a slight remix, emphasising the disco-styled drum sound to give it a better shot second time round, but it didn't quite reach the Top 30, and only spent five weeks in the chart. The 'Waterloo' LP hadn't done badly, but its Eurovision-connected sleeve had hardly gained ABBA much street credibility, and 'Ring Ring' seemed to confirm the quartet's consignment into the three minutes of fame society. Worse was to come, when the next single, a double A-side in retrospect if perhaps not at the time, of 'So Long' and 'I'll Be Waiting For You', didn't even reach the UK chart. Maybe the latter song, a track which might bear comparison with Phil Spector's classic girl-group sound, would have been a better bet as the side recommended for radio play than the neo-hard rock of 'So Long', which was not a style used a lot by ABBA. Whatever, it didn't chart, and all the suspicions about Eurovision fodder came flooding back. The media didn't want to write about ABBA, because despite some radio play, nobody was buying the single. File under five minute wonders...

It was nearly a year before they were back in the UK singles chart, with a song which has never been a personal favourite. 'I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do' had 'novelty' stamped all over it, although perhaps





its originality went over our heads. It got into the UK Top 50, but didn't jump much higher the next week, so three CBS radio pluggers dressed up as a wedding party and went to BBC Radio One in a limousine to dispense champagne and copies of the single to prominent disc jockeys - perfectly legal, if a bit kitsch. The single just crept into the Top 40, before plummeting. By then, ABBA were not my responsibility as a press officer (which caused me little loss of sleep, as I had developed a perverse admiration for The Wombles, who were infinitely more successful at the time, with five Top 20 hits in 1974). A second LP had been released, with the hardly original title of 'ABBA'. It didn't even reach the UK album chart until it had been around for over six months, only being dragged in when it became clear that it included both 'S.O.S.' which restored ABBA to the Top 10 and 'Mamma Mia' (their second UK Number One), which no-one had noticed on the LP until they became smash hits.

One other vivid memory of my year as ABBA's press officer is of going to their London hotel (next to Radio One) and having a discussion with them about their future plans - not that it was any of my business, but it came up in conversation. Their idea was to do a concert at the London Palladium, and when they suggested this, my response must have displayed guarded enthusiasm - it seemed uncertain whether they could fill a bus, let alone the Palladium, but it would have been rude to say as much. With the benefit of hindsight, it becomes clear that they knew exactly what they were doing, because in early 1977, they sold out two nights at the Royal Albert Hall, and by then, they were the biggest act in Britain, with their fifth Number One single, 'Knowing Me, Knowing You', imminent. Forget the Palladium!

It used to worry me, as a 'serious' rock writer, that I was associated with ABBA, but it is true to say that their records were probably the real Sound Of The Seventies. For several years, they at least rivalled the universal popularity of The Beatles at their peak and it stopped

being a problem, because they were so consistently (and deservedly) successful. It was interesting to watch their growth from shy Swedes to international superstars, and it is probably accurate to claim that their 'Greatest Hits' LP, released in 1976, was the first with such a title to include only six hits among its 15 tracks (40%), and to feature four tracks which had never been released in Britain before at all, one of them the group's third chart-topper, 'Fernando'. Such confidence, but it was not misplaced, as

'Greatest Hits' became their first UK Number One LP, and was followed by seven more chart-topping LPs in the next six years, before the strain of being two divorced couples outweighed, for Agnetha especially, the challenge of carrying on.

Agnetha and Björn's marriage in retrospect could never have lasted, as their ambitions and aims so rarely coincided, but why Benny and Frida threw in the marital towel is less clear. Each one of them remains a star as a human being, and Benny & Björn have successfully continued to write monster hits, such as 'I Know Him So Well', the 1985 duet by Elaine Paige & Barbara song is from the musical 'Chess', which was a successful theatrical piece, playing in London's West End for many months, to which they composed the score with lyrics by Sir Tim Rice, a man who knows a good tune when he hears it, and knew that Björn & Benny were brilliant tunesmiths. After several years of silence, in 1992, the breath-taking 'ABBA Gold' album was released, a hit-packed album which topped the charts in 14 countries, and had sold seven million copies worldwide by July 1994. A new ABBA era had begun as Erasure topped the UK singles chart with their 'ABBA-esque' EP, and an Australian quartet calling themselves Björn Again became one of the most popular live acts around. The new CD





restored them to the top, and it was as if they had never been away. This success confirms that ABBA are truly legendary, one of the finest pop acts of the century, fit to be mentioned in the same breath as The Beatles, as this feast of their work effortlessly demonstrates. It is probably worth noting that ABBA will never reform for a world tour, although whether the original quartet could be enticed to record together again as ABBA is a different matter...

Anyway, thank you for the music...

John Tobler 1994

*Author of 'ABBA For The Record'
1980, & 'ABBA Gold', 1992.*

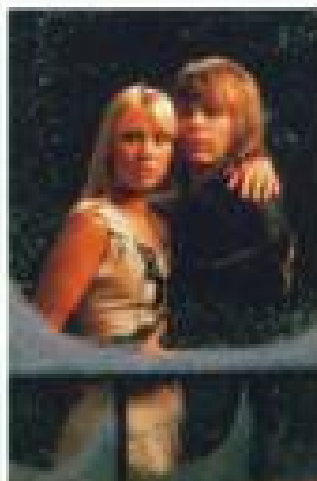


HEAD-OVER-HEELS

I HAVE A VERY GOOD FRIEND
THE KIND OF GIRL WHO
LIKES TO FOLLOW A TREND
SHE HAS A PERSONAL STYLE
SOME PEOPLE LIVE IT
OTHERS TEND
TO GO WILD
YOU HEAR HER VOICE
EVERYWHERE
TAKING THE CHAIR
SHE'S A LEADING LADY









pop video pioneers

Denis McNamara

One of the most overlooked of ABBA's achievements in their glorious career was their innovative music videos. Created at a time when there were no MTV's, these so called "music promotional films" stand up as highly original, ingenious visions that very much capture the beauty of the music and the band.

In a television interview with Björn Ulvæus, recorded during March 1994 in Stockholm, he spoke to me with pride about the band's pioneering music video work.

He was quick to give credit to another now famous Swedish artist. Says Björn, "We have to acknowledge director Lasse Hallström because he was the one who did the original videos for many years, and he also did the movie. We were very lucky. Because of his work, we had major success in far off places where we couldn't go but could send the videos."

According to Björn, "Lasse had a vision. You have to understand that the video as such wasn't around in those days. I remember we had a look at something called a 'promotion film' from a record company in America. It was one camera, one shot, very badly done. We said it must be possible to do a thing like this but much, much better. Then, we could use it for television and so forth. That was the general idea at the beginning and Lasse thought that was a brilliant idea. He came up with all the concepts. We might have had some input but mostly it was him."

The ABBA videos came to life in many different locales: studio recording sessions, concert appearances, circus rings, lush nature scenes and idyllic country manors. In fact, Björn remembers the group game sequence from "The Name of the Game" was filmed in the lounge of his and Agnetha's house.

Montages, often edited at machine-gun speed, are just some of the innovative effects liberally sprinkled throughout the films to help accentuate the beat, rhythm or lyrics of the individual song. On the band's first big international hit "Waterloo", Björn recalls "The intro had to be something that was remembered instantly." So, the opening of the "Waterloo" film explodes with a dizzying mélange of visuals to portray that intensity.

Discussing the distinctive singing head-shot boxes from "Take A Chance With Me", Björn says, "I think we wanted to do videos where they (the fans) could actually see us. At that time, there were many videos that were very, very obscure and artistic but you couldn't actually see the group at all. We wanted to take the ABBA route. I remember that distinctly."



Abba with Andy Gibb and Olivia Newton-John at UNICEF Concert January 1979



Magical colours fill these ABBA promotional films. Even the colour white, at least subliminally if not intentionally, emphasizes the pop purity that ABBA always portrayed in their career.

ABBA was a natural for television. They were a striking and appealing act, and their videos did everything to accentuate this appeal. Adding to this was the band's often outrageous on-stage costumes. In an interview in 1994,

Björn admits that, at times, the group's fashion approach was "highly unsophisticated. I will say today I am ashamed when I look at some of the costumes but then again, we had fun!"

Consummate professionals as musicians, producers and performers, ABBA often appeared and performed on live television shows. Sometimes, they would find local TV producers had strange ideas for presenting the band. An example of this (included on the ABBA Gold collection) is "Chiquita". This much-loved international hit was sung in the Swiss countryside with the band performing in front of an immense snow-man who looms over them, almost like a monster they were somehow attempting to soothe with song. Björn says "I don't know why we did it. It was very cold."

Perhaps their most famous television appearance was at a benefit concert for UNICEF in 1979 along with the Bee Gees, Rod Stewart, Earth, Wind and Fire, Olivia Newton John and Donna Summer. Some 70 countries and an audience estimated at more than 300 million shared in the event, a precursor of many worldwide broadcast charity music events in the years to follow.

Hallström has since gone on to become a worldwide success as the motion picture director behind award winning films like "My Life As A Dog" and "What's Eating Gilbert Grape?". Björn says the members of ABBA are not surprised: "We always



knew he had great talent. He was very good with music as well. I always thought he would go on to something bigger, absolutely!"

However, history will record that Lasse Hallström's first full length motion picture release was "ABBA: The Movie" in 1977. It is a surprisingly smart and entertaining story of a radio DJ's comical inability to land an ABBA interview during the band's real Australian tour. Full of actual concert footage, the band's big screen debut is a wonderful timepiece from the height of ABBA-mania down under. Surprising the film community and many critics, the movie proved to be a major commercial success.

Again Björn is quick to credit Hallström: "He was very clever with the movie because ABBA, at that time, was occupied with different projects like recording and touring. So, the only chance he really had to make a movie with us, as he wanted to make a movie, was to record it during a tour. In other words, he had to write some kind of a thin story line around a group touring, which he did very cleverly. It's very simple but I think it's enjoyable." As for the actual filming, Björn remembers, "There were droves of people everywhere. It was absolutely unreal and incredible. The way the film describes that is reality. It was very clever to make us mysterious and unapproachable because that's exactly what we were to that reporter."

Fascinating in their brief schemes and innocent storylines, the movie and the videos, many of which are featured on the collection entitled "ABBA Gold", are unique in scope for the period in which they were created. On closer examination, decades later, it's difficult not to be amazed at the often sheer genius that makes these visual moments an important reminder of the Pop perfection that was ABBA.

Denis McNamara 1994

Former U.S. Radio programmer and current Senior International Director for A&R Polydor USA

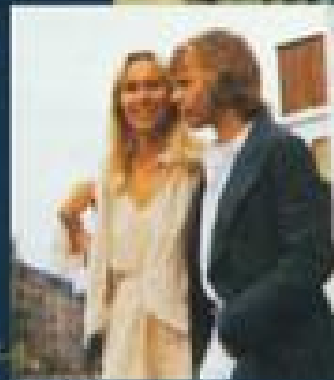
ONE OF US

I thought I was
 playing it safe
 I thought
 you were, I felt
 robbing me
 of my right to romance
 my picture floor
 everything seemed so easy
 and so I could
 see the line
 one of us had to go
 the proud tiger
 I want you to know

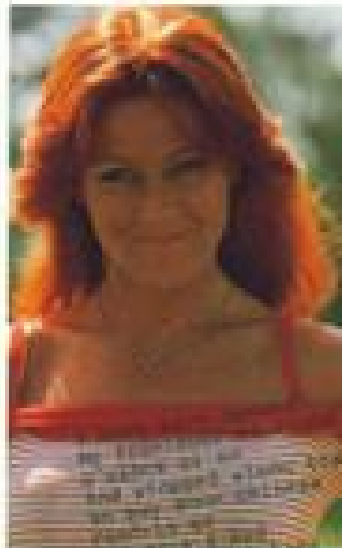
One of us is cryin'
 one of us is lyin'
 in our lovely bed
 staring at the ceiling
 wishing she was
 somewhere else instead
 one of us is lonely
 one of us is only
 waiting for a call
 sorry for herself
 feeling stupid
 feeling small
 wishing she had
 never left at all

I saw myself
 as a concealed attraction
 I felt you
 kept me away
 from the heat
 and the action
 just like a child
 stubborn and misconceiving
 that's how I
 started the show
 one of us had to go
 now my darling
 I want you to know

they passed me by
 they left their hearts
 behind



KVAVI SVAR LAG KONSTIGT



THE DAY BEFORE YOU CAME

I must have left my house
at eight because
I always do
my train. I'm certain
left the station
just when it was due
I must have read the
morning paper.
Given late town
and having gotten through
the editorial no doubt
I must have frowned
I must have made my desk
around a quarter after nine
with letters to be read
and heaps of papers
waiting to be signed
I must have gone to lunch
at half past twelve or so
the usual place, the usual lunch
and still on top of this
I'm pretty sure it
must have rained
The day before you came

I must have lit
my seventh cigarette
at half past two
and at the time
I never even
noticed I was blue
I must have kept on
drinking through the
business of the day
and without really knowing
anything I hid
a lot of me away
I must have left

I must have
my dinner
something on TV
there a lot, I think
a single episode
dinner that
I must have
around a
I must
had on
in bed
I must
The last
by far
or some
It's funny
no sense of life
without a
The day before you came
and turning out the light
I must have yawned
and cuddled up for
yet another night
and talking on the roof
I must have heard
The sound of rain
The day before you came



memorabilia

"I've lost count the number of times I've travelled to London for interviews and photo shoots, carrying heavy bags of Abba records and memorabilia, all for display purposes. You can guarantee all is not used, but I still continue to carry those heavy bags around with me"





"One interview that was broadcast on a local TV show, where I was surrounded by my memorabilia, I was asked if Abba had affected me abnormally. My reply was 'No, although some friends think I'm a little crazy. I'm no different to someone who collects stamps, coins, football programmes, chart records or even classic cars'."



Stamp courtesy of Swedish Post Stamps

Kathryn Courtney

English Correspondent for the
Agnetha, Benny, Björn, Frida Fanclub



[Faint, illegible text from the background page, likely lyrics or a magazine article.]





platforms and pearls

Like many groups of the glam rock era in the mid '70's, Abba's stage outfits reflected this period and were extraordinary pieces of art.

Owe Sandström was the designer of the infamous Abba costumes. Here he describes how they were designed and made.

"There was a team of four designers who provided over 500 outfits for Abba. Often just 4 sq. meters of fabric was dyed to a special colour and woven in Italy so that patterns were totally unique. Many designs were developed "on body" rather than on paper. All the costumes were hand made and hand painted and some were decorated with beautiful jewels. There was an extensive network of suppliers worldwide to provide these jewels and stones, some were imported from India and Swedish mountain crystals were used."

No expense was spared...



"Shoes were designed in Sweden, made in London and altered in Stockholm!"



'Annitrid had a good eye for design, an impeccable memory and was the most interested in the costumes. Agnetha knew what she liked.

The Japanese outfits were based on traditional costumes which were worn when meeting the Emperor. The sleeves were plain when arms were pointing to the right to meet the Emperor, and the decorated sleeve was shown when pointing to the left on returning to the family. This represents knowledge gained from meeting the Emperor!

The cat design was based on Owe's pet and he used real crystals for the cat's claws. Many costumes were duplicated with slightly different shades, specially for the different TV systems worldwide so that the band always looked the same.'

"Stig Anderson said he did not want any 'folk' costumes but wanted a hint of Sweden hence the use of blue and yellow from the Swedish national flag. Costumes were to be sexy. However, Stig was not too happy when Agnetha was dubbed 'near of the year' with no reference to Abba's music."





Robbins - Jerry Robbins and Loris Luttikhuis

"People come to me and say, but really Owe - they looked terrible in those costumes, but you must go back to 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, it was the fashion - I must really say the most important thing for me is that you still remember ABBA."

Owe Sandström
Costume designer



discography

Carl Magnus Palm

disc one

1 People Need Love

Recording began 28th March 1972 at Metronome Studio. This single was the first record to be credited to "Björn & Benny, Agnetha & Anni-Frid", and reached number 17 on the Swedish charts.

2 Another Town, Another Train

Recorded late 1972 or early 1973 at KMH Studio. Released as a single in Zimbabwe and the US. A German version (Wär in Wattenal Der Liebe Steht) featured on the B-side of the Ring Ring (German version) single.

3 He Is Your Brother

Recording began 17th October 1972 at Europa Film Studios. The second Björn & Benny, Agnetha & Anni-Frid single is one of Frida's favourites from this period.

4 Love Isn't Easy

Recording began 14th March 1973 at Metronome Studio, one of the last tracks to be recorded for the Ring Ring album. Subsequently released as a single A-side in the Nordic countries (except Sweden).

5 Ring Ring

Recording began 10th January 1973 at Metronome Studio. This watershed single reached number two on the Swedish charts (the Swedish version reached Number One). The multi-overdub recording was inspired by producer Phil Spector's recording techniques, with engineer Michael B. Tretow adding his own invention of altering the speed slightly between overdubs for good measure. This technique made for a much deeper sound, and would be used frequently throughout the rest of ABBA's recording career.

6 Waterloo

Recording began 17th December 1973 at Metronome Studio. The first record to be credited to "ABBA", and after their breakthrough Eurovision Song Contest victory on 6 April 1974, the single became their first Number One hit in several countries, also reaching the US Top Ten.

7 Hasta Mañana

Recording began 18th December 1973 at Metronome Studio. This Australian Top Twenty hit had the working title Who's Gonna Love You, and almost became ABBA's contribution to the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest.

8 Honey Honey

Recording began 17th October 1973 at Metronome Studio. A number 2 hit in Germany.

9 Dance (While The Music Still Goes On)

Recording began 24th September 1973 at Metronome Studio. This was the first track to be recorded for the Waterloo album, and was inspired by early sixties Phil Spector hits.

10 So Long

Recording began 22nd or 23rd August 1974 at Glen Studio. A Top Ten hit in Sweden, and a Top Twenty hit in Germany.

11 I've Been Waiting For You

Recording began 15th September 1974 at Glen Studio. B-side to the So Long single.



12 I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do

Recording began 21st February 1975 at Glen Studio. This single A-side was inspired by the European "schlager" music, and also by the saxophone sound of American 1950's orchestra leader Billy Vaughn. A Top Three hit in Holland and Australia, and a US Top Twenty hit.

13 S.O.S.

Recording began 22nd or 23rd August 1974 at Glen Studio. The working title for this single A-side was Turn Me On, and it became ABBA's first major worldwide hit since *Waterloo*.

14 Mamma Mia

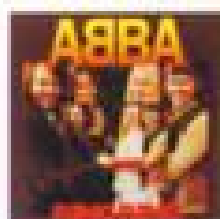
Recording began 12th March 1975 at Metronome Studio. Michael B. Tretow's all time favourite ABBA track was written at Björn's and Agnetha's home. As a single A-side, it returned the group to the Number One spot in several countries, and was their first UK chart topper for almost two years.

15 Fernando

Recording began 3rd September 1975 at Metronome Studio after an unsatisfactory attempt in early August had been made (see Disc Four). Originally titled Tango, the song was recorded in Swedish for Frida's 1975 solo album *Frida Ensam*, but was later subject to an English vocal overdub, and released as an ABBA single in February 1976.

16 Dancing Queen

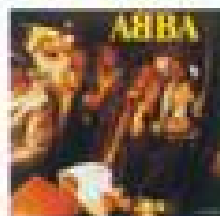
Recording began 4th or 5th August 1975 at Glen Studio. This 1976 single A-side was a Number One hit in almost every country where it was released, and became ABBA's only US chart topper. Originally titled Boogaloo, its drum part was inspired by George McCrae's 1974 disco hit *Rock Your Baby*.



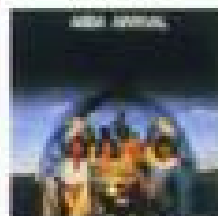
Tracks 1-5 taken from *Ring Ring*



Tracks 6-9 taken from *Waterloo*



Tracks 10-14 taken from *Abba*



Tracks 16-19, 21 taken from *Arrival*

17 That's Me

Recording began 24th March 1976 at Metronome Studio. B-side of *Dancing Queen*, and also one of Agnetha's favourites.

18 When I Kissed The Teacher

Recording began 14th June 1976 at Metronome Studio. This is one of Benny's ABBA favourites.

19 Money, Money, Money

Recording began 17th May 1976 at Metronome Studio. It became ABBA's 11th consecutive Number One single in Australia.

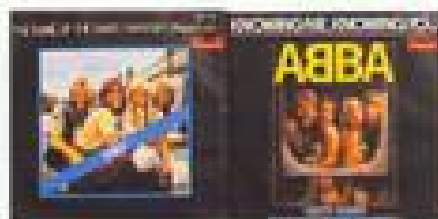
20 Crazy World

Recording began 16th October 1974 at Glen Studio during sessions for the ABBA album. The track was left in the can until it surfaced again during the *Arrival* sessions, and eventually ended up as the B-side of the *Money, Money, Money* single in November 1976. Previously unavailable on CD.

21 My Love, My Life

Recording began 20th August 1976 at Metronome Studio. The working title was *Monsieur, Monsieur*, and a complete demo recording with those lyrics had been recorded previously.





disc two

1 Knowing Me, Knowing You

Recording began 22nd March 1976 at Metronome Studio. The original working title for this single A-side was Ring It In, and it became ABBA's sixth consecutive Number One single in Germany.

2 Happy Hawaii

Recording began 26th April 1976 at Metronome Studio. This recording, dating from the Arrival sessions, was meant to remain unreleased after the group had decided that the song had not received its best treatment, but was later used as the B-side to the Knowing Me, Knowing You single. After the melody had been slightly reworked, the group re-recorded the song as Why Did It Have To Be Me (which had also been the original working title), and then included this final version on the Arrival album.

3 The Name Of The Game

Recording began 31st May 1977 at Marcus Music Studio. This was the first song to be recorded for ABBA - The Album, and was originally titled A Bit Of Myself. The track was released as a single A-side in October 1977, and became a Number One hit in England and Ireland.

4 I Wonder (Departure)

Recording began 3rd or 4th March 1977 at the Sydney Showground, Sydney, Australia. The song was taken from the mini-musical The Girl With The Golden Hair, featured in ABBA's 1977 tour of Europe and Australia. A studio recorded version of the song was included on ABBA - The Album, while this live recording ended up as the B-side of The Name Of The Game.

5 Eagle

Recording began 1st June 1977 at Marcus Music Studio. The working title was High, High, and Björn's lyrics were inspired by the Richard Bach novel Jonathan Livingston Seagull. An edited version of the song was released on single in 1978 in a limited number of territories.

6 Take A Chance On Me

Recording began 15th August 1977 at Marcus Music Studio, after an attempt had been made earlier in the month (see Disc Four). The original working title was Billy Boy, and the track was released as a single A-side that became a US Top Three hit.

7 Thank You For The Music

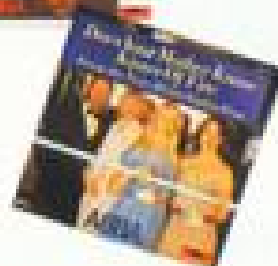
Recording began 21st July 1977 at Glen Studio after a complete alternate version had been recorded in early June (see Disc Four). The song was taken from the musical The Girl With The Golden Hair, and was released as a single A-side in 1983.

8 Summer Night City

Recording began 28th May 1978 at Metronome Studio. This is the previously unreleased full length version of this recording, which was originally meant to be included on the 1979 Voulez-Vous album. A shorter edit was released as a single A-side, which became a Number One hit in Sweden. Previously unreleased.

9 Chiquitita

Recording began 13th December 1978 at Polar Music Studios, after attempts earlier in the month had been discarded (see Disc Four). Chosen as a single release in favour of If It Wasn't For The Nights (off the Voulez-Vous album), it became ABBA's fifth consecutive Number One hit in Ireland.



10 Lovelight

Recording began 24th April 1978 at Marcus Music Studios. The track was originally titled Hades and was recorded for the Voulez-Vous album. It ended up being released only as the B-side to the Chicquitta single.

11 Does Your Mother Know

Recording began 6th February 1979 at Polar Music Studios. The working title was I Can Do It, and the track originally featured a 30 second instrumental introduction which was ultimately cut from the recording. A session in late March saw the addition of Benny's characteristic synthesiser introduction, as well as work on the backing track that turned this boogie rock stomper into a disco track.

12 Voulez-Vous

Recording began 1st February 1979 at Criteria Recording Studios, Miami, USA. A songwriting trip to The Bahamas saw the birth of the melody, and the proximity to Miami made it convenient to record the backing track at Criteria with members of disco group Foxy.

13 Angel Eyes

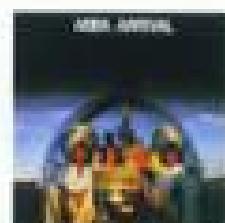
Recording began 28th October 1978 at Polar Music Studios. The working title was Katakum, and the track was subsequently released as a double A-side single with Voulez-Vous on the other side.

14 Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!

Recording began 9th August 1979 at Polar Music Studios. The track was released as a single A-side, and reached number two in Holland and Ireland.

15 I Have A Dream

Recording began 15th March 1979 at Polar Music Studios. Released as a single A-side in December 1979, it was a Number One hit in Holland and Ireland.



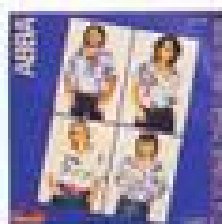
Track 1 taken from:
Arrival



Tracks 3,5,6,7, taken from
Abba - The Album



Tracks 9,11,12,13,15 taken from:
Voulez - Vous



disc three

1 The Winner Takes It All

Recording began 4th June 1980 at Polar Music Studios, after an attempt earlier in the month had been discarded. The working title was *The Story Of My Life*, and the finished recording was released as a single A-side in July, topping the charts in the UK and reaching the US Top Ten.

2 Elaine

Recording began 5th February 1980 at Polar Music Studios. Originally intended for the *Super Trouper* album, but only released as the B-side of *The Winner Takes It All*.

3 Super Trouper

Recording began 3rd October 1980 at Polar Music Studios. This was the last track to be recorded for the album of the same name. Subsequently released as a single A-side that became ABBA's last UK Number One.

4 Lay All Your Love On Me

Recording began 9th September 1980 at Polar Music Studios. Released on a 12" single in 1981 with *On And On And On* as the B-side.

5 On And On And On

Recording began 12th February 1980 at Polar Music Studios. A US single A-side with *Lay All Your Love On Me* on the B-side.

6 Our Last Summer

Recording began 4th June 1980 at Polar Music Studios. A few notes from a mid-seventies composition that would eventually be released as *Anthem* in the 1984 Anderson/Uhaseus/Tin Ritz musical *Chess*, can be heard in the background during Lasse Wellander's guitar solo.

7 The Way Old Friends Do

Recording began 8th November 1979 at Wembley Arena, London, England. This live recording of a song that had been written especially for ABBA's 1979 World tour, was subject to a few overdubs in October 1980, and then included on the *Super Trouper* album.

8 The Visitors

Recording began 22nd October 1981 at Polar Music Studios. This song, with lyrics dealing with the dangerous situation for Soviet Union dissidents, subsequently became a US single A-side.

9 One Of Us

Recording began 21st October 1981 at Polar Music Studios. This track was originally titled *Mi Amore*, and became ABBA's 12th Number One hit in Ireland.

10 Should I Laugh Or Cry

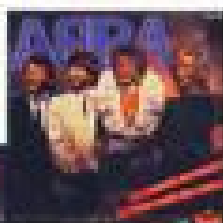
Recording began 4th September 1981 at Polar Music Studios. Recorded during sessions for *The Visitors*, but released only as the B-side to the *One Of Us* single.

11 Head Over Heels

Recording began 2nd September 1981 at Polar Music Studios. Released as a single A-side in 1982.

12 When All Is Said And Done

Recording began between 16th and 19th March 1981, at Polar Music Studios. The lyrics dealt indirectly with Benny's and Frida's divorce, and the track became a US single A-side in 1982.



13 Like An Angel Passing Through My Room

Recording began 8th November 1981 at Polar Music Studios. The last track to be attempted, with two previous versions recorded in May and October.

14 The Day Before You Came

Recording began August 1982 at Polar Music Studios. Except for a snare drum overdub by Ake Sundqvist, taped on 20th August, the backing track for this recording consists solely of Benny's synthesiser and a drum machine. This became a Top Ten single in Germany and reached Number Three in Holland.

15 Cassandra

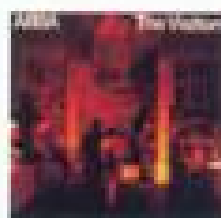
Recording began between 2nd and 4th August 1982 at Polar Music Studios. B-side to The Day Before You Came.

16 Under Attack

Recording began between 2nd and 4th August 1982 at Polar Music Studios. ABBA's last single as an active group contained fragments from the unreleased Just Like That and Rubber Ball Man (see Disc Four), and was a Top Five Hit in Holland.



Tracks 1,3,6,5 & 7 taken from
Super Trouper



Tracks 8,9,11,12,13 taken from
The Visitors

NOT FOR RELEASE

Through the years Abba made many demos of songs that were not to appear on record. These try-outs were an important way of finding out what the songs were about, their weaknesses and strengths. With few exceptions the words were hastily scribbled down in the studio. Their sole purpose was to provide something to sing, grammar and content not being the first priority. *Björn Ulvén*

disc four

1 Put On Your White Sombbrero

Recording began 9th September 1980 at Polar Music Studios. This track was recorded during sessions for the *Super Trouper* album, but was left off in favour of the title track. *Previously unreleased*

2 Dream World

Recording began 27th September 1978 at Polar Music Studios. The middle eight of the song, recorded during sessions for the *Waster Vast* album, was used in *Does Your Mother Know*. *Previously unreleased*

3 Thank You For The Music (Doris Day)

Recording began 2nd June 1977 at Marcus Music Studios. The first studio-recorded version of this song from the musical *The Girl With The Golden Hair*, was not what the group wanted at the time, and was accordingly re-recorded in July. *Previously unreleased*

4 Hej Gamle Mann!

Recording began June 1970 at Metronome Studio. The first recording to feature all four members of ABBA, was only credited to Björn & Benny, and was included on their *Lycka* album, and also released as a single A-side. A Top Five hit in Sweden.

5 Merry-Go-Round

Recording began 29th March 1972 at Metronome Studio. This B-side of the *People Need Love* single was originally released in a Swedish version (En Kanadell) as a single A-side credited to Björn & Benny. *Previously unavailable on cd*

6 Santa Rosa

Recorded March 1972 at Metronome Studio. The B-side to the *He Is Your Brother* single, originally titled *Granäppa's Bara*, and intended to be released as a Björn & Benny single in Japan. *Previously unavailable on cd*

7 She's My Kind Of Girl

Recorded in November or December 1969, probably at Europa Film Studios. This track was written for the obscure movie *Haga 8*, and was originally released as the first Björn & Benny single in March 1970. In 1972, it was released in Japan and went on to sell half a million copies. The recording does not feature any contribution from Agnetha or Frida, but was subsequently put on the B-side of the Swedish issue of the *Ring Ring* (English version) single, and also in some territories on the album of the same name.

8 Medley Pick A Bale Of Cotton On Top Of Old Smokey Midnight Special

Recording began 4th May 1975 at Glen Studio. This recording remains ABBA's only release of material not written by themselves, and was originally released on the 1975 German charity album *Stern Im Zeichen eines Guten Sterns*. In 1978 it was remixed and released as the B-side of the *Summer Night City* single, and it is this mix which appears on this set. *Previously unavailable on cd*

9 You Owe Me One

Recording began 4th May 1982 at Polar Music Studios. B-side to the *Under Attack* single. *Previously unavailable on cd*

10 Slipping Through My Fingers/ Me And I (Live)

Recorded 28th or 29th April 1981 at Svanen Television. Live versions of a song from *The Visitors* album (at that time yet to be released), and a track from the *Super Trouper* album respectively, recorded for *The Dick Cavett Meets ABBA TV Special*. *Previously unreleased*



ABBA Undeleted

By Michael B. Trotow

When working on the Abba Gold project, I discovered some very odd titles on the old master tape boxes, deep down in the PolyGram vaults. Songs like "Källspår", "Kalle Skändare", "Ettas Väst Det Svänger När Man Spelar Jazz", Hamlet III... In fact some of them you know really well. You might know them under a different name, though. For instance, "Ettas Väst Det Svänger När Man Spelar Jazz" was later injudiciously renamed "On and on And On I". And "Kalle Skändare" was somehow changed to "Summernight City" for no apparent reason!

When Björn and Benny arrived at the studio with new songs they never had any proper names for them, so it was up to me to label the tapes with whatever silly title I could think of. But some of the titles I couldn't remember. What's "Hamlet III"? Or "Santas Inferno", was it any good? All these demos, what were they like? Why didn't they make it to the albums? To find out, I brought a few of these ancient boxes to my studio, and here's what I discovered:

Scaramouche

Recorded June, 1977 at Marcus Music.
(Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Janne Schäfer: Guitar Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass Ola Brunkert: Drums) Obviously I must have thought that this instrumental was very similar to another song, which tells a lot about my musical ability.

Summernight City

Recorded October, 1978 at Polar Studios.
(Benny Andersson: Piano) This almost a cappella version of Summernight City was never released due to Björn mixing up the lyrics.

Take A Chance On Me

Recorded August 3, 1977 at Marcus Music.
(Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass Ola Brunkert: Drums Malena Ernman: Percussion) A lot of hard work went into this great song. This is only one of several attempts to find the right feel. It was never found...that day.

Baby

Recorded October 18, 1978 Glen Studio.
(Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Finn Sjöber: Guitar Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass Roger Palm: Drums) This is of course what later became "Rock Me". The original backing track of Rock Me was still in key to suit the girls, so when Björn finally took the lead, it was very, very high for him! He was literally on his toes, grasping for air, knotting his whole body in order to reach those high notes! It took him hours to sober up after inhaling all that oxygen!

Just A Notion

Recorded January (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Janne Schäfer: Guitar Ola Brunkert: Drums Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass) We started out with primitive analogue 8-track and over the years we expanded gradually until we had 32 glorious digital tracks to play with. Funny thing, however, we were always 1-track short! This was due to Benny, constantly coming up with new ideas for still another synth part. When a song was supposed to be finished and all the tracks were filled to the last dB, Benny always came up with a brilliant phrase that would be too good to be left out. But with all tracks recorded, there would be no place to put it, if we didn't erase another track in favour for the new one. Like a... drum track! MY drumtrack! Sure, I had



recorded the drums on several tracks, but still! This procedure would go on and on until there was only pathetic remains of my once glorious drum sound! Eventually I thought I had found a way around this dilemma by recording the drums on all of the tracks and telling Benny "Sorry, we're out of tracks" before he even got started, but he didn't buy that.

Rikky Rock 'N' Roller

Recorded September 15, 1974 at Glen Studio (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Finn Sjöberg: Guitar Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass Roger Palm: Drums) These were noisy, exciting days! The people who owned Glen Studio had an indoor pool, where I used to place the guitar amp. Not only did it prevent them from using the pool, the tiles were also coming off the walls like Autumn leaves!

Burning My Bridges

Recorded June 3, 1980 at Polar Music Studios (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Ola Brunkert: Drums Miké Watson: Bass). One of the greatest things about these studio musicians were their ability to adapt to just any style of music. Just listen to the slide guitar picking by Lasse Wellander on this one! Lasse, Ola, Rutger, Janne, Miké and Roger could play in every known style, and just kept on playing for hours with the same enthusiasm! After 13 hours or so with the same song, however, they would get tired. That's how I got my reputation for being quite a funny guy. In the middle of the night you could crack the worst joke in the world, and everybody would just break into hysterical laughter, making you feel like the world's No. 1 comedian! You can hear a fine example of this 13-hour-syndrome after this track, when I suggest a silly name for this song. Ola Brunkert goes into an uncontrollable state, and had to be carried away from the studio and treated with buckets of black coffee.

Fernando

Recorded August 5, 1975 at Glen Studio (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Michael Andrew: Guitar Anders Glenmark: Guitar Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass Roger Palm: Drums) One of many attempts to get this one on tape. Following the usual procedure, it was treated in almost every conceivable musical way, C & W, Pop, rock, Metal - Polka or Acid - Water until it felt good. Here's a Swedish Tango version.



Here Comes Rubie Junie

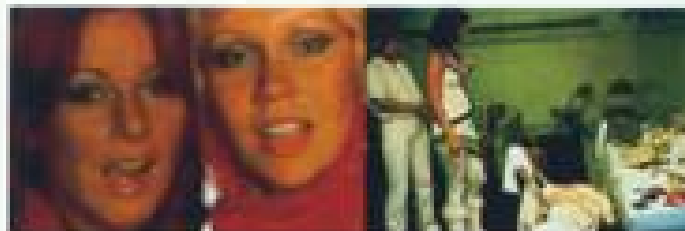
Recorded September 16, 1974 at Glen Studio. (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Janne Schaffer: Guitar Roger Palm: Drums Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass) One of the rare occasions when Benny takes the lead! Björn and Benny used to hate this song, but finally agreed to let you share this magic moment in the studio for the sake of historic documentation. Incidentally, to start with none of them thought there was any point in releasing this studio chatter documentation! Who would be interested in that! And they said that to a guy who owns practically every noise Elvis made! I've spent hundred of dollars on bootleg albums like "Elvis got a cold", "Elvis eats hamburgers", "Elvis burps"! Fans want it all! Right? Of course Björn is no Elvis, that's not my point. But Benny is!

Hamlet 111 Parts 1&2

Recorded March 13, 1978 at Metronome Studio. (1) Recorded August 31, 1978 at Polar Music Studios (2) (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Rolf Alex: Drums Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass) This is another example of a great song that never made it to an album. We tried to record it on several occasions but it never quite happened until years later, when Benny made his first solo album. Imagine our surprise when it proved to be a whiffle! (A primitive Swedish dance)

Free As A Bumble Bee

Recorded May 29, 1978 at Metronome Studio (Benny Andersson: Keyboards Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Janne Schaffer: Guitar Roger Palm: Drums Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass) Good old Metronome, where it all started! We only had 8 tracks at our disposal, harmonizers and digital echo were unheard of, but we had two huge echo chambers, and boy, did we use them! (Not on this song, however... my mind is drifting...) Metronome was a great place to record, only surpassed by our own studio, Polar, when it was built in 1978. In those days you had to create the sounds by physical means, not electronically like today. We were putting wet towels on top of the drums, bread loafs inside the bass drum and toilet paper inside the tom - toms. We tried everything...like recording the vocals under water...there was always new sounds to be discovered! The drums should be as fat as possible in those days. Fat and tight. The bass drum was supposed to sound like a Christmas turkey hitting wet asphalt, while the snare drum should sound more like a hippopotamus hit by a juke box. Well...it was great fun!



Rubber Ball Man

Recorded August 8/30, 1979 at Polar Music Studios. (Berry Anderson: Keyboard(s) Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Roger Palm: Drums Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass Åke Sundqvist: Percussion Anders Eljas: Keyboard(s) String arrangement by Rutger Gunnarsson. Björn always had an uncanny ability to disconnect his ears from the rest of the system, making it possible for him to write lyrics to one song, with the studio monitors at full blast playing another song! Once he wrote an inspired musical about mashed potatoes (...sure, a high absorbing subject, but still...), while simultaneously mixing the Super Trouper album.

Crying Over You

Recorded September 16, 1978 at Polar Music Studios (Berry Anderson: keyboard) Just to show you how far ahead of our time our recording techniques were, here's an early experiment with a drum loop. A couple of bars were lifted from a completely different song, and were then spliced together the old fashioned way, creating a loop of tape, 15 or so meters long. This loop was then suspended by microphone stands, chains and door knobs, all across the control room. The song ended when someone opened the door from the outside.

Just Like That

Recorded May 3, 1982 at Polar Music Studios (Berry Anderson: Keyboard(s) Björn Ulvæus: Guitar Lasse Wellander: Guitar Per Lindvall: Drums Rutger Gunnarsson: Bass...SAX TTT) The girls were real troupers. After the musicians had left, they would still be around, trying out new parts for the song after one full day of belting. They would work incredibly hard, singing such high notes that my goggles would crack, leaving them totally exhausted, clutching their throats. (the goggles, not the girls!) Still Björn and Benny would always tell them: That's great! Now let's see if we can get the same thing all over again - one octave higher!

Givin' A Little Bit More

Recorded May 25, 1981 at Polar Music Studios (Berry Anderson: Keyboard(s) Björn Ulvæus: Guitar) Thanks to modern recording technics, Björn is singing all the parts in harmony with himself and Benny's even playing one of the acoustic guitars (with a 10 - kroner coin instead of a pick)

12 Waterloo

French/Swedish version

Overdubs of French vocals probably recorded 18th April 1974 in Paris, France, and Swedish vocals recorded late 1973 or early 1974, at Metronome Studio. A German version of this song was also recorded.

13 Ring Ring

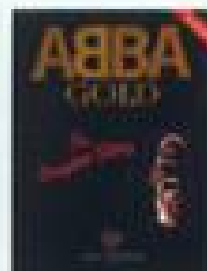
Medley of Swedish, Spanish, and German versions

Overdubs of Swedish vocals recorded January 1973 at Metronome Studio, and Spanish and German vocals recorded July 1973, probably at Metronome Studio. The Spanish version of Ring Ring is previously unreleased.

14 Honey Honey

Swedish version

Overdubs recorded 30th January 1974, probably at Metronome Studio. This Swedish version of Honey Honey was issued on the B-side of the Waterloo single (Swedish version). Previously unavailable on cd.



ABBA - The Complete Recording Sessions is a meticulously researched book by Carl Magnus Palm which chronicles ABBA's extraordinary career. It includes many previously unpublished photos & recordings & a foreword written by Björn & Benny.

ABBA GOLD - The Complete Story by John Tobler is the definitive account of ABBA's career authorised by the group themselves. A lavishly illustrated book, it gives a detailed and unique insight into the group's hugely successful rise to superstardom.

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credits

I was in Stockholm in October 1993 at the Cafe Opera for a presentation to celebrate sales of over five million copies of Abba Gold. After the photos we had some lunch and Michael Tretow was very excited about the research he had been doing with a young man called Carl Magnus Palm who was writing a book on the recordings of Abba. He had found many tapes of unreleased material that he had forgotten about and started to relate stories of tracks that had been abandoned or discarded. Björn mentioned that he was pleasantly surprised at the quality of some of these recordings and was pleased that Carl Magnus Palm was not a fanatic and was doing a serious book. I suggested that perhaps we should consider a box set to chronicle the history of the band and include some of these recordings. The Police had just released their box set and we could do the same for Abba. Frida thought that it was a good idea although Benny was not so sure.

Dozens of fans have written to me with lists of unreleased tracks that they all knew were waiting to be released. They told me of the mythical last album 'Opus 10' and the tracks that have appeared on poor quality bootlegs. Carl Magnus Palm provided the definitive list of what was in the archive. Having discussed these unreleased tracks with Björn and Benny they would repeat the comment 'that they were not good enough then, so they are not good enough now!' But that was in the days of 40 minute vinyl albums when there often wasn't room to include all the songs recorded. Several months later at a

meeting at Mono Music a proposal was put to Benny and Björn for a box set consisting of 3 CDs containing all the hits, B sides and main album tracks, and a fourth collectors CD containing rare and unreleased songs.

At a later meeting Benny asked who is going to buy this box set. Wearing my record company hat I suggested many of the fans who had bought the two 'Gold' compilations. Michael Tretow said if this was Elvis he would be buying it. Sold to the man at the piano.

When they were recording, Abba would just stop if the song wasn't working. Benny and Björn said they could not agree to release tracks that were only partly finished. Michael Tretow came up with an ingenious solution - link these parts together as a studio rehearsal. Brilliant. Problem solved!

This compilation would not have been possible without the full involvement of Björn and Benny, the enthusiasm of Michael Tretow, the research of Carl Magnus Palm, the patience of Görel Hanser, the knowledge of Kathryn Courtney and support from colleagues George McManus, Ingemar Bergman, Bill Levenson, Jackie Stansfield and Andy Greenham. There are many others who deserve Special Thanks in making this box set happen.

Thank You For The Music. Enjoy!

Chris Griffin August 1994



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"Thank You" to ABBA fans worldwide

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